

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
Between the  
COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE  
BLIND OR SEVERELY DISABLED  
and the  
SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION



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The Committee For Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled (the “Committee”) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) (together, the Parties) enter this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to mutually promote the employment and training mission of the Committee’s Javits-Wagner-O’Day (JWOD) Program and SSA’s employment support provisions.

The Committee For Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled is an independent Federal agency responsible for administration of the Javits-Wagner-O’Day (JWOD) Program as authorized under the JWOD Act of 1971 (41 U.S.C. 46-48c). The mission of the JWOD Program is to use the purchasing power of the Federal Government to provide people who are blind or have other severe disabilities with employment and training that will develop and improve job skills as well as prepare them for employment options outside the JWOD Program. The Committee administers the JWOD Program in partnership with two non-governmental organizations, National Industries for the Blind (NIB) and NISH (serving people with a range of severe disabilities), which in accordance with the JWOD Act, are authorized by the Committee to allocate mandatory source Federal contracts to over 600 NIB- and NISH-associated State and local nonprofit agencies nationwide. The JWOD Program is committed to the provision of training and employment opportunities which expand consumer choice, enabling the widest possible range of career options for people with disabilities, and to implementation of the President’s New Freedom Initiative in partnership with other programs that support increased employment for people with disabilities.

Social Security has been the most successful government program providing economic protection to Americans. Social Security is also a primary economic protector of Americans with disabilities through the Social Security Disability Insurance program and the Supplemental Security Income program. Both of these disability programs include incentives and employment support provisions to help beneficiaries move into the workforce either as employees or as entrepreneurs. SSA’s Office of Employment Support Programs (OSEP) has centralized responsibility for improving SSA’s policies and service to people with disabilities who want to work.

SSA is committed to increasing opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in the workforce and improve their economic well-being. SSA recognizes that its strong participation in the President’s New Freedom Initiative and other programs in support of people with disabilities will make their lives more fruitful and rewarding.

Enabling individuals to leave the disability rolls by achieving self-sufficiency will help to preserve both the Disability Insurance trust fund and general revenues.

**Responsibilities:**

The Parties agree to support and promote the employment and training mission of the JWOD Program and SSA's employment support programs in the following ways:

The Committee, in consultation with NIB and NISH, will:

- Advise local NIB and NISH-associated agencies about SSA's Ticket to Work Program and other SSA employment support programs that are available to help the nonprofit agencies meet their clients' vocational training and employment goals. Assist SSA in its recruitment of NIB and NISH-associated agencies to serve as Employment Networks (ENs), and assist SSA with its development of marketing materials, training materials and mass mailings to promote and support the Ticket to Work Program;
- Encourage local NIB- and NISH-associated agency staff to form partnerships with local SSA authorized purchasers and other appropriate personnel to promote awareness of how Federal agency participation in the JWOD Program generates employment for people with disabilities in their community;
- Encourage local NIB- and NISH-associated agencies to provide more information about their services to SSA's clients with disabilities who require employment and training assistance; and
- Encourage local NIB- and NISH-associated agency staff to notify SSA offices of relevant meetings, conferences, job fairs, and other appropriate activities.

SSA will:

- Provide updated information to its authorized purchasers and other appropriate personnel about the JWOD Program and explain how the services of NIB- and NISH-associated agencies can help SSA assist beneficiaries with disabilities making the transition to work;
- Continue to advise local NIB- and NISH-associated agencies about SSA's Ticket to Work Program and other SSA employment support programs available to help the nonprofit agencies meet their clients' vocational training and employment goals;

- Continue to inform SSA purchasers who contract for services, buy office products and other supplies about the special status of the JWOD Program as a mandatory source of supply for Federal personnel and their obligation to consider whether JWOD items will meet their requirements before shopping elsewhere.

The Committee and SSA/OESP will:

- Share information concerning the mutual needs of the parties, as appropriate;
- Publicize the joint and individual efforts made in support of the JWOD Program and SSA's employment support provisions on both agencies' Internet websites and other appropriate media;
- Each bear the cost of their respective responsibilities under this MOU. Accordingly, there will be no transfer of funds between the parties.

### Points of Contact


The contacts for this MOU are the Deputy Director of the Committee and the Associate Commissioner, Office of Employment Support Programs, SSA.

### Term

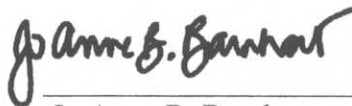
This MOU will take effect at the time of the signing and will remain in effect for 2 years. The Parties may extend this MOU for 2 additional years by written agreement.

### Signatures

The Signers of this MOU represent that they have the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their respective organizations.



Leon A. Wilson, Jr.  
Executive Director  
Committee For Purchase From People Who  
Are Blind or Severely Disabled



Jo Anne B. Barnhart  
Commissioner of Social Security

Date: